

MARK-UP OF AMENDED CLAIMS

31. (Twice Amended) The attachment assembly of claim [29] 120 wherein the securing [member] element having an enlarged integral portion is slidably disposed within the bore.

52. (Three Times Amended) A method of attaching an orthopedic implant assembly to a bone of a patient, comprising

a) providing

a securing member with an elongated body and an enlarged integral portion having a maximum transverse dimension,

an attachment member which has an anterior surface and a posterior surface and which has at least one bore extending through the attachment member from the anterior surface to the posterior surface and is configured to receive the securing member, the bore having an anterior bore portion, and a posterior bore portion with at least one transverse dimension smaller than a transverse [dimensions] dimension of the anterior bore portion and smaller than the maximum transverse dimension of the enlarged integral portion of the securing member, and

a stopping member which has a first configuration which allows passage of the enlarged integral portion of the securing member and has a second configuration that reduces a transverse [configuration] dimension of the bore that is smaller than the maximum transverse dimension of the enlarged integral portion of the securing member

in order to retain the enlarged integral portion of the securing member within the posterior bore portion of the attachment member;

- b) positioning the attachment member with at least part of the posterior surface thereof against a surface of the patient's bone; and
- c) [the enlarged integral portion of the securing member having a maximum dimension greater than the smaller transverse dimension of the posterior bore portion to retain the enlarged integral portion of the securing member within the posterior bore portion; and]

[d)] attaching the securing member to the patient's bone by advancing the securing member within the bore of the attachment member until the enlarged integral portion of the securing member passes the stopping member thereby displacing the stopping member to the first configuration and is disposed in the posterior bore portion, the stopping member then returning to the second configuration to retain the enlarged integral portion within the posterior bore portion and to facilitate longitudinal movement of the enlarged integral portion of the securing member within the posterior bore portion.

63. (Four Times Amended) An orthopedic implant assembly, comprising:

- a. a stabilizing element having an anterior surface, a posterior surface, and at least one bore extending through the stabilizing element from the anterior surface to the posterior surface and the bore having an anterior bore portion with a transverse dimension and a posterior bore portion which has a posterior opening with a transverse

dimension smaller than the transverse dimension of the anterior bore portion;

b. a securing element which is configured to be slidably disposed within the bore of the stabilizing element and which has an elongated body and an enlarged integral portion with a maximum transverse dimension; and

c. a stopping member which is at least partially disposed within the bore of the stabilizing element, which has a posterior stopping surface, a first configuration within the bore allowing passage of the securing element into the posterior bore portion with the enlarged integral portion of the securing [member] element disposed in the posterior bore portion posterior to the stopping member and a second configuration within the bore which has smaller transverse dimensions than the first configuration and smaller than the maximum transverse dimension of the enlarged integral portion of the securing element to facilitate retention of the enlarged integral portion of the securing member within the posterior bore portion of the stabilizing element and to facilitate longitudinal movement of the enlarged integral portion of the securing element within the posterior bore portion.

115. (Twice Amended) The orthopedic attachment assembly of claim 120 wherein,

- a. the elongated securing element has an enlarged integral portion with a length, a posterior surface and a transverse dimension and a shaft extending from the enlarged integral portion configured to be secured within bone;
- b. the attachment element has an anterior surface and a posterior surface and has at least one bore extending through the

attachment element from the anterior surface to the posterior surface and is configured to receive the securing element, the bore having an anterior bore portion, a posterior bore portion having at least one transverse dimension smaller than the transverse dimension of the enlarged integral portion of the securing element to retain the enlarged integral portion of the securing element within the posterior bore portion; and

- c. the stopping member defines at least in part [a length of] the posterior bore portion, said posterior bore portion being [that is] longer than the length of the enlarged integral portion of the securing element to allow longitudinal displacement of the enlarged integral portion of the securing [member] element within the posterior bore portion.

116. (Twice Amended) The orthopedic attachment assembly of claim 115 wherein the securing [member] element has a portion posterior to the enlarged integral portion that has a transverse dimension smaller than a transverse dimension of an opening in the posterior bore portion to provide angular displacement of the securing [member] element within the posterior bore portion.

118. (Amended) The orthopedic attachment assembly of claim 116 wherein the enlarged integral portion of the securing [member] element has a maximum transverse dimension which is greater than the second transverse dimension of the stopping member.

119. (Amended) The orthopedic attachment assembly of claim 118 wherein

the enlarged integral portion of the securing [member] element has a tapered posterior surface configured to expand the stopping member upon the passage therethrough.

122. (Twice Amended) An orthopedic attachment assembly, comprising:

- a. an elongated securing element having an enlarged integral portion with a length, an anterior surface, a posterior surface and a transverse dimension;
- b. an attachment member which has an anterior surface and a posterior surface and which has at least one bore extending through the attachment member from the anterior surface to the posterior surface and is configured to receive the securing [member] element, the bore having an anterior bore portion, a posterior bore portion having at least one transverse dimension smaller than the transverse dimension of the enlarged integral portion of the securing [member] element; and
- c. a plurality of biased stopping members that are part of the attachment member, [which have] each of said stopping members having a posterior stopping [surfaces] surface, a first configuration [that] wherein the stopping members extend within the bore and [that] wherein the stopping members are elastically deformed by the passage of the enlarged portion of the securing [member] element to a second configuration to allow passage of the enlarged portion of the securing [member] element into the posterior bore portion, the biased stopping members returning to the first configuration upon passage of the enlarged portion and the posterior stopping surfaces configured to engage the anterior surface of the

securing [member] element facilitating retention of the enlarged integral portion of the securing [member] element within the posterior bore portion of the attachment member.

123. (Amended) The orthopedic implant assembly of claim 122 wherein the biased stopping [element comprises one or more] members are contractible fingers.

124. (Pending) The orthopedic implant assembly of claim 122 wherein the plurality of biased stopping members comprise resilient longitudinally deflectable members which have first un-deflected configurations within the anterior bore portion and deflected configurations which allow the enlarged integral [head] portion of the securing [member] element to pass into the posterior bore portion, the one or more deflectable members having posterior surfaces that are configured to engage an anterior surface of the enlarged integral [head] portion of the securing [member] element to prevent the back-out of the enlarged integral head of the securing element from the posterior bore of the stabilizing element and facilitate retention of the enlarged integral head of securing element within the posterior bore portion.

126. (Amended) The assembly of claim 120 wherein [at least one of the anterior surface of the head and] the posterior stopping surface of the stopping member [are] is perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the bore.